



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/916,918	07/27/2001	Radu Victor Balan	2001P13674 US	8793

7590 06/13/2005

Siemens Corporation
Intellectual Property Department
186 Wood Avenue South
Iselin, NJ 08830

EXAMINER

OPSASNICK, MICHAEL N

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2655

DATE MAILED: 06/13/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/916,918	BALAN ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Michael N. Opsasnick	2655	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 February 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1-11,14,15,17-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Leahy et al (6219045).

As per claims 1,14, and 15, Leahy et al (6219045) teaches a virtual environment system (abstract) comprising:

“an acoustic localizer...environment” as determining the sound location (col. 5 lines 1-10)

“a user data...remote data...system controller....I/O device” as client/server relationship (Fig. 2);

“wherein control of said remote data.....localizer” as controller determines position of the user (col. 5 lines 15-25);

“wherein data.....said user” as remote data transmission (fig. 2, col. 3 lines 42-51)

Art Unit: 2655

As per claim 2, Leahy et al (6219045) teaches using a plurality of microphones
(col. 4 lines 62-66)

As per claim 3,18,19, Leahy et al (6219045) teaches transmission thru I/O device
(fig. 2, col. 3 lines 42-51)

As per claim 4, Leahy et al (6219045) teaches video and sound (fig. 4)

As per claims 5-11, Leahy et al (6219045) teaches I/O of computing devices
(including PDA's, wireless, and differing video input -> col. 3 lines 51-67).

As per claim 17, Leahy et al (6219045) teaches position determination (col. 5
lines 15-25).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all
obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 2655

4. Claims 12,13, and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Leahy et al (6219045) in view of Geilhufe et al (6584439).

As per claims 12, 13, and 16, Leahy et al (6219045) teaches commands from the user (Fig. 4, subblocks 116, including speech and motion), but Leahy et al (6219045) does not explicitly teach voice commands; however, Geilhufe et al (6584439) teaches a GUI using voice commands to control the input from the user (col. 2 lines 50-67; col. 6 lines 53-65). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of user interface design to modify the teachings of Leahy et al (6219045) so that the devices within Leahy et al (6219045) would be voice controlled because it would advantageously allow the user to control the devices without requiring buttons (Geilhufe et al, col. 2 lines 63-66).

As per claim 16, Leahy et al (6219045) further teaches user position detection (col. 5 lines 15-25).

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed 2/24/2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. As per applicant's arguments on page 5,6 of the response, applicant's argue that "there is no disclosure in Leahy of an acoustic localizer that can determine the location of a sound source in a local environment". Applicant argues further that a chat room is not a virtual environment. Examiner disagrees and notes that a chat room is a virtual environment (by definition, a chat room is a physical area or physical location where people/persons gather

Art Unit: 2655

physically to talk/chat; a virtual chat room is an environment that represents a physical area or physical location where a representation of people/persons gather to talk/chat; such a representation is disclosed by Leahy's chat room). In this virtual environment, Leahy discloses a proximity of the avatars to determine how loud or soft the audio should be (col. 5 lines 50-67; referring back to the level of audio – col. 5 lines 1-7). Examiner also notes that the claimed "local environment" is in a claimed "virtual environment system".

On page 6 of the response, applicant's allegation that "the Examiner has failed to make out a prima facie case of obviousness", the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, the motivation to combine has been presented from the Geilhufe reference.

Conclusion

6. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period

Art Unit: 2655

will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

7. Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

or faxed to:

(703) 872 9314,

(for informal or draft communications, please label "PROPOSED" or "DRAFT")

Hand-delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park II, 2121 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA., Sixth Floor (Receptionist).

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael Opsasnick, telephone number (571)272-7623, who is available Tuesday-Thursday, 9am-4pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. Wayne Young, can be reached at (571)272-7582. The facsimile phone number for this group is (571)272-7629.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group 2600 receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272-2600, the 2600 Customer Service telephone number is (571)272-2600.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

mno
6/7/05


W. R. YOUNG
PRIMARY EXAMINER